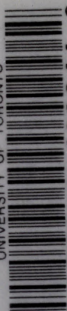


UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO



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Blake, Edward
The Irish question

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“EIGHTY” CLUB.

THE IRISH QUESTION

WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO

HOME RULE IN CANADA.

SPEECHES

BY

THE HON.

EDWARD BLAKE, M.P.

MR. E. J. C. MORTON, and MR. ROBERT W. HAMILTON,

AT

THE CRITERION,

On THURSDAY, AUGUST 4th, 1892.

MR. JAMES BRYCE, M.P.

IN THE CHAIR.

Secretary, J. A. B. BRUCE, 2, Middle Temple Lane, London, E.C.

1892

PRESIDENT.

*RIGHT HON. W. E. GLADSTONE, M.P. (1884).†

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TREASURER.

* THOMAS SADLER, 2, Garden Court, Temple, London.
(Hon. Sec. 1885, Treas. 1887.)

SECRETARY.

J. A. B. BRUCE, 2, Middle Temple Lane, London, E.C. (1883).

 In all communications with the Secretary about obtaining Speakers for Meetings, the words "Eighty Club" should be written on outside of envelope.

* Candidates for Parliament. † Date first elected to the Committee.

"EIGHTY" CLUB.

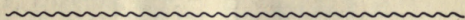


THE

IRISH QUESTION

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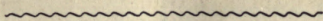
AT THE DINNER

On Thursday, August 4th, 1892,

At the CRITERION,

AND

LIST OF THOSE PRESENT AT THE DINNER.



Mr. JAMES BRYCE, M.P.

IN THE CHAIR.

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1892

"EIGHTY" CLUB.

DINNER on THURSDAY, AUGUST 4th, 1892,

At the CRITERION,

TO

The Hon. E. BLAKE, M.P.

JAMES BRYCE, M.P., IN THE CHAIR.

Members.

JAMES BRYCE, M.P.
(*in the Chair.*)

ADKINS, W. R. D.
*AINSWORTH, D., M.P.
*ALLEN, C. F. EGERTON, M.P.
*ASQUITH, H. H., Q.C., M.P.
BARNES, G. S.
BEALE, PHIPSON, Q.C.
*BEAUFOY, MARK, M.P.
*BENSON, G. R., M.P.
BERTRAM, T. A.
BIRON, H. C.
*BIRRELL, A., M.P.
BISGOOD, J. J.
†BRASSEY, LORD
*BROWNING, OSCAR
BRUCE, J. A. B. B. (*Secretary*).
*BRYCE, J., M.P.
*BUCHANAN, T. R.
*BURT, T., M.P. (*Hon Member.*)
*BUXTON, SYDNEY, M.P.
*CAUSTON, R. K., M.P.
*CHANNING, F. A., M.P.
CLARK, J. W.
*CLOUGH, W. O., M.P.
*COBB, HENRY P., M.P.
*CONYBEARE, C. A. V., M.P.
COOK, E. T.
COOKE, H. PAGET
COOKE, RUSSEL
COORE, G. B. M.
CORNFORTH, W.
*COSTELLO, B. F. C.
COTTON, H. E. A.
*CROMBIE, J. W., M.P.
*CROOK, W. M.
*DAVEY, SIR HORACE, Q.C.
DAVID, A. J.
DILLON, H. W.

Guests.

THE HON. E. BLAKE, M.P.
(*Guest of the Evening.*)

ALSTON, B. F.
ATKIN, EDWARD
ATLAY, J. B.
*BAKER, J., M.P.
BATES, T. E.
BENN, C. A.
*BILLSON, A., M.P.
BLAKE, E.
*BOLTON, J. C.
*BUNTING, P. W.
*BYLES, W. P., M.P.
BYRNE, J.
*CARVILL, P. G. H., M.P.
CLARK, H. R.
COOKSHUTT, J. (Canada)
CRAGGS, H.
CROFT, H.
*CROSSFIELD, W., M.P.
*ESSELMONT, P., M.P.
FAIRCLOUGH, R. A.
FLETCHER, A. E.
FLUDYER, Col.
FREEMAN, J. J.
GERY, A. R.
GREEN, T.
GUNN, W. (Toronto)
HAMILTON, J. Z. M.
HILLEARY, F., LL.D.
HILLMAN, —
HOPWOOD, F. J. S.
*HOUSTON, Dr., Q.C.

Members.

DUFFIELD, W. B.
*DUNCAN, J. A.
DUNN, H. A. COLMORE
*FARQUHARSON, Dr., M.P.
*FERGUSON, R. C. MUNRO, M.P.
FIGGIS, S.
*FRY, THEODORE, M.P.
GEAKE, C.
GILMOUR, T. L.
*GOWER, G. LEVESON, M.P.
GREIG, J. W.
GREVILLE, LORD
*GREY, SIR EDWARD, Bart., M.P.
*HALDANE, R. B., Q.C., M.P.
HALKETT, BARON
HAMILTON, ROBERT W.
HAWKSLEY, B. F.
*HAYTER, SIR A., Bart.
HOLMS, D. L.
HUTCHINSON, C. C.
INCE, GERARD
*KEARLEY, HODGSON, M.P.
KEMP, JOHN
KIMMINS, CHAS. W.
*KNOX, E. F. V., M.P.
KNOX-SHAW, C.
LAMBERT, Rev. BROOKE
*LATHAM, A. M.
LAWRENCE, HON. C. N.
*LAWSON, SIR WILFRID, Bt., M.P.
LAWSON, WILFRID, jun.
*LEESE, JOSEPH, Q.C., M.P.
*LEHMANN, R. C.
*LEON, H., M.P.
*LOUGH, T., M.P.
*LUSH, A. H.
*LUTTRELL, HUGH C. L., M.P.
MACCOLL, Rev. CANON MALCOLM
MACDONELL, GEORGE P.
MACDONEL, J.
MACFIE, T. GIRDWOOD
MACMILLAN, G. A.
*MAPPIN, SIR F. T., Bart., M.P.
MARCUS, H. W.
MASON, D. M.
MATHEW, THEOBALD
*MCARTHUR, W. A., M.P.
*MENDL, S. F.
MOLONEY, M.
MOORE, Professor W. HARRISON,
(Melbourne.)
*MORICE, BEAUMONT.
*MORTON, E. J. C., M.P.

Guests.

KELLNER, Dr. (Vienna)
KIRWIN, Captain
LEDWARD, E. H.
LODGE, R.
*MACCARTHY, JUSTIN, M.P.
MASSINGHAM, H. W.
MATHEW, F. J.
MATHERS, J. S.
McCARTHY, Hon. J. A. (Sierra Leone)
McCONKY, Col. ED. (New York)
McKELWAY, ST. C.
MENDL, C. F.
MENDL, F.
NIELD, J.
NORMAN, I. S.
*O'CONNOR, T. P., M.P.
*PATTON, F. J.
PEARS, E. (Constantinople)
*PEARSON, W. D.
PERKINS, S.
PONSONBY, HON. ASHLEY
POWELL, F. YORK
*PROVAND, W. D., M.P.
*RICHARDSON, JOSEPH, M.P.
ROBERTS, E. C.
*ROBY, H. J., M.P.
ROLLER, A.
RUSHBROOKE, W. G.
*SAMUELSON, SIR B., Bart., M.P.
SMITH, Dr. HERBERT
*SMITH, H., M.P.
SPALDING, T. A.
STEVENS, E. H.
STEEVENS, G. W.
*STUART, Professor, M.P.
THOMPSON, H. YATES
*WALKER, J. DOUGLAS, Q.C.

The Times.
Daily News.
Daily Chronicle.
Central News.
Press Association.
Daily Graphic.

Members.

*NEILL, W.
*NUSSEY, T. WILLANS
O'FLYNN, DILLON.
OKE, A. W.
PARKYN, E. A.
*PAUL, H. W., M.P.
*PEASE, JOSEPH A., M.P.
PELHAM, H. F.
*PRINCE, HENRY.
RADFORD, GEORGE H.
*REID, R. T., Q.C., M.P.
REID, WEMYSS
RICKMAN, J. PELLAT
RITCHIE, A.
ROSKILL, J.
*RUSSELL, SIR CHARLES Q.C., M.P.
RUSSELL, CHARLES, Jun.
RUSSELL, FRANK.
*SADLER, T. (*Treasurer.*)
SAFFORD, FRANK.
*SERENA, A.
*SHIPMAN, J. G.
SHORTT, J.
SLACK, J. B.
SMITH, G. C.
*STEVENS, T.
*STEVENSON, F. S., M.P.,
STRAHAN, Professor J. A.
*SUMMERS, WILLIAM, M.P.
SWANZY, F.
TORR, JAMES F.
TURNER, G. J.
VERNEY, F.
WALLER, G. E.
WALLIS, H.
*WHALE, GEORGE
WILLIAMS, MORGAN I. M.
YATES, W. B.
YOUNGER, R.
SCHULTZ, GEORGE A.

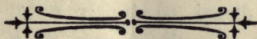
Guests.

Exchange Telegraph Co.
Star.
Freeman's Journal.
(Toronto Paper.)
(Ottawa Citizen.)
J. Moore & Sons.

About 200 were present at the dinner,
and 50 ladies came in afterwards to
hear the speeches ; in all, 250.

Mr. E. J. C. MORTON, M.P.,
proposed, and Mr. ROBERT W.
HAMILTON seconded, the vote of
thanks to Hon. E. BLAKE, M.P.

* Denotes Candidate for Parliamen at
General Election.



The Irish Question.

SPEECH BY THE HON. EDWARD BLAKE, M.P.

At the Eighty Club Dinner on Thursday, August 4th, 1892 (the opening of the new Parliament), the Hon. Edward Blake, M.P., was the guest of the evening. Mr. James Bryce, M.P., took the Chair, and there were also present: Sir Charles Russell, Q.C., M.P., Sir Horace Davey, Q.C., Mr. Justin McCarthy, M.P., Lord Brassey, Lord Greville, R. T. Reid, Q.C., M.P., T. Burt, M.P., Mr. H. H. Asquith, Q.C., M.P., Mr. R. B. Haldane, Q.C., M.P., T. P. O'Connor, M.P., Sir Wilfrid Lawson, Bart., M.P., Augustine Birrell, M.P., R. K. Causton, M.P., D. Ainsworth, M.P., G. R. Benson, M.P., C. F. E. Allen, M.P., Sydney Buxton, M.P., F. A. Channing, M.P., H. P. Cobb, M.P., W. O. Clough, M.P., J. Barker, M.P., W. P. Byles, M.P., P. G. H. Carvill, M.P., A. Billson, M.P., P. Esslemont, M.P., J. W. Crombie, M.P., C. A. V. Conybeare, M.P., Dr. Farquharson, M.P., R. C. Munro Ferguson, M.P., W. Crossfield, M.P., Sir Edward Grey, Bart., M.P., Sir Bernard Samuelson, M.P., T. Fry, M.P., W. D. Provand, M.P., J. Richardson, M.P., Professor Stuart, M.P., H. Kearley, M.P., E. F. V. Knox, M.P., E. J. C. Morton, M.P., H. Leon, M.P., Hugh Luttrell, M.P., J. Leese, Q.C., M.P., Sir F. Mappin, Bart., M.P., T. Lough, M.P., W. A. McArthur, M.P., Wm. Summers, M.P., H. Smith, M.P., F. S. Stevenson, M.P., H. W. Paul, M.P., E. T. Cook, A. E. Fletcher, W. D. Pearson, H. W. Massingham, J. S. Mather, Wemyss Reid, Hon. C. N. Lawrence, Sir Arthur Hayter, Bart., Canon McColl, Rev. Brooke Lambert, Dr. Houston, Q.C., T. R. Buchanan, W. M. Crook, B. F. C. Costello, J. A. Duncan, T. L. Gilmour, H. F. Pelham, S. Mendl, Professor J. A. Strahan, T. Willans Nussey, Professor W. Harrison Moore (Melbourne), B. F. Hawksley, J. C. Bolton, Douglas Walker, Q.C., G. C. Smith, G. Stapleton Barnes, Charles Russell, jun., Frank Russell, Phipson Beale, Q.C., Hon. Ashley Ponsonby, T. A. Bertram, C. Geake, J. Roskill, W. B. Duffield, Arthur Serena, T. Sadler (*Treasurer*), D. M. Mason, Robert W. Hamilton, Rudolph Lehmann, J. Z. M. Hamilton, J. A. B. Bruce (*Secretary*). About 200 were present at the dinner, and 50 ladies came in afterwards; in all, about 250.

The CHAIRMAN, upon rising to speak immediately at the conclusion of the dinner, was received with cheers. He said: We are met upon the morrow after the battle, and it has been one of the most hardly-fought fights that the history of elections in England has recorded. (Hear, hear.) We have come

out of the fight not indeed scatheless, but victorious—(cheers)—and the Eighty Club has been in the thick of the combat. Although most of our members are young in years, the Club may claim to be the Old Guard of the Liberal Army. We have sent more than 500 of our members into election work. 193 of our members went to contest seats, and of those 193 gentlemen 103 have been victorious and 28 of them have had the especial glory of winning seats from the enemy. (Applause.)

We have to regret the defeat of some of our ablest and most energetic candidates, but those champions, though wounded in the fray, are not discouraged, and will be ready to fight when the opportunity occurs again. It is so clearly the duty of a Chairman to leave ample room for the guest of the evening, that I will resist the temptation to discuss the incidents of the late election, and will not even dwell upon those forces which have told so heavily against some of our unsuccessful candidates, forces which I may call liquid arguments, addressed not to the ears but to the throats of the lower strata among the electors. (Laughter.)

Upon that subject we are promised some interesting revelations presently. All that I shall now do is to make two remarks—one bearing upon the past, the other upon the future. What has been the nature of the judgment just delivered by the country? It has been a judgment pronounced upon the greatest of our political issues—upon an issue which has been before the country for six years, and which has been, so to speak, driven and hammered into the midst of the country as very few political issues ever have been. Upon that issue the country has pronounced its judgment. It has pronounced a judgment not merely against a vote-catching and time-serving Government (hear, hear), a Government which has sought to combine Tory men with pseudo-Liberal measures, but a judgment in favour of the policy of reconciliation with Ireland and of the statesman who has identified himself with that policy, (cheers), and who has advocated it with a fertility of resource, a tenacity of purpose, and unswerving earnestness and energy of moral conviction which very few causes have ever enjoyed and which no other living man could have displayed. (Cheers.)

No one can say that Home Rule was not the issue before the country. If we had been disposed, which we were not, to leave it in the background, our opponents took good care to keep it in the foreground. I suppose there is hardly a blank wall or a hoarding in Britain which has not been covered by pictorial representations of the Union Jack, accompanied by appeals, more passionate than rational, to save the Empire from destruction. Let me, therefore, call your attention to a very material fact about the deliverance given on this great issue. We were told in 1886 that the country had pronounced decisively against Home Rule. Now, what was the popular majority in that year against the Liberal Ministry and its Home Rule scheme? It was a popular majority of 76,000. And what is the popular majority by which the principle of Home Rule has been affirmed? It is a majority of, as near as I can make out, 227,000 (cheers), and that majority has delivered its opinion after the long and full consideration which the constant debates of these six years have secured; so we may truly say that there has been an appeal from a country which was comparatively ignorant and startled—from a country which gave its decision in perplexity and haste, to a country which has heard the whole case fully and has pronounced its decision after the amplest deliberation (hear, hear), by a popular majority thrice as great as that which formerly decided against it.

In the face of this popular deliverance the Tories are driven to say that it is not enough to have a majority of the United Kingdom, but that there must be a majority of England as well. Well, gentlemen, remembering how the Union of 1800 was carried that seems an odd argument to use, but it is odder still if we bear in mind how often we have been told that the inhabitants of the United Kingdom were only one nation, that there is no difference between England and Ireland, that Ireland is for purposes of legislation and government even as England, only rather more so. It seems scarcely logical and consistent to urge in the same breath that Ireland is so like Britain that she cannot possibly require a legislature of her own, and that she is nevertheless so unlike Britain that the voice of her members must be reckoned apart and their

verdict kept separate from that pronounced by the other island. It is not very logical, but the Tory Party never was famous for its logic, and we shall probably have to listen to and confute many arguments even worse than this before the Home Rule Bill is through Committee.

I have also a remark to make about the future. We are told that our majority in this House of Commons is comparatively a small one. Doubtless it is comparatively small when we remember the great majorities of 1868 and 1880, and I do not mean to say that one would not like to have it larger. When I looked to-day at the assembling of the House of Commons for the faces of some whom we have lost and some whom we hoped to gain, I did heartily wish that twenty or thirty more of those tried and able Liberals whom the Eighty Club sent into the field had been there to help us. But, gentlemen, there are compensations even for a small majority. You may recollect what Homer says of one of his heroes, "He was not a big man, but he was a fighter." Our majority may not be as large as we could wish, but it is a hearty majority, an earnest majority, a majority which is full of that fighting spirit that comes from a well-contested general election; and if I may venture, gentlemen, looking round on this gathering and seeing in it the familiar faces of many Parliamentary friends, to speak for the members of the Liberal Party in Parliament whom I see present, I will say that we are prepared to give a far more diligent, close, and regular attendance than has usually been given or required, and that we are animated by and will display in the pursuit of those great common ends upon which our mind is set a spirit of union and harmonious co-operation which larger majorities have sometimes lacked. (Cheers.) There are many English and Scottish objects before us, many great objects upon which the country has spoken its will, and we trust to press forward vigorously those objects and carry not a few of them through this Parliament. But there is one which no doubt transcends all the rest, and to which our main efforts in this session must be directed, and that is, the carrying of a measure of Home Rule. (Cheers.) It is therefore with unusual pleasure

that we welcome here to-night a new and powerful ally in our combat for Home Rule. (Cheers.)

Very seldom have the amplitude and the variety of the Queen's dominions and the splendid liberality of our Parliamentary system been more strikingly illustrated than they have been in this election. A London constituency has chosen as its member a gentleman from the far East—(cheers)—and I am glad to hear that he is present to-night among us, a man of character and ability, belonging to one of the most ancient and famous of the civilized races of the East, who has come among us to plead the cause of his Indian fellow-subjects in the great Council of the Empire. And from beyond the Atlantic we receive an illustrious statesman, illustrious not more by the brilliancy of his talents than by the elevation and dignity of his character, who has crossed the sea to place at the service of the Imperial Parliament and of the people with whom by extraction he is connected, those gifts of eloquence and that wide experience of affairs which he has acquired in the government of Canada. (Cheers.) You know how distinguished Mr. Blake has been and is as a lawyer, as an orator, and as a Minister. You know how much he has done to raise the public life of Canada, and to inspire it with his own high spirit. I have the good fortune to know something about Canada, and I can say with confidence that, keen as political warfare is in Canada—and I think Mr. Blake will agree with me that, as they say in Canada, there is more politics to the square yard there than anywhere else—harsh and bitter as are the criticisms which Canadian politicians pass upon one another—I have never heard a word said by anyone in Canada reflecting either upon the straightforward political uprightness, or upon the tried political courage of our friend Mr. Blake. (Cheers.) It is no light matter that at a crisis like this a man of such powers should come among us; and I hope that we may treat his coming not only as a visible sign of the interest which the great problem of the reconciliation of Ireland to Britain awakens in that vast British and Irish population beyond our shores, which is now so important a factor in the world, but we may treat it also as a contribution of a most valuable help to ourselves in the work

which we have undertaken. We see in Mr. Blake one who brings to this work a keen intelligence, a large experience, and a matured statesmanlike judgment. We believe that those gifts of his will prove precious aids in the solution of this problem, which among the questions of our time is the greatest and the most difficult, because upon its solution depend not only the peace and welfare of Ireland but the unity and the strength of the British Empire itself. (Cheers.)

The Honourable EDWARD BLAKE, M.P., who on rising was received with loud cheers, said: Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,—My first words must be of gratitude to the members of the Eighty Club, for the signal honour of their invitation; and of thanks to you, Sir, for your language all too kind, and the compliments, far beyond my poor deserts, which you have paid to me, and to this distinguished company for the warmth of its reception. I cannot but recall at this moment the only previous occasion on which it was my fortune to be present at an Eighty Club dinner. In May, 1888, I sat beside Charles Stewart Parnell, while as your guest he made a very important speech. (Hear, hear.)

That striking man and leader of men, who had in a degree so extraordinary acquired the confidence and devotion of his fellow-countrymen, and had rather compelled than conciliated the admiration of large masses of the British people (hear)—who had in spite of some drawbacks taken, and will, notwithstanding all abatements due to his lamentable fall, the stormy closing months and the tragic end of his life and career, will still retain a great place in the history of his generation (cheers)—that striking man then sealed anew, both by his presence and his words, the cordial alliance which he had formed between the Irish National and the British Liberal parties, proclaimed once more his confidence in the good faith and good fortune of those allies, illustrated by the narration of new facts the sincerity of his adhesion to the moderate and constitutional courses which he professed, and exhorted his

fellow countrymen to bear their ills for a season still, and to wait in patient confidence for the consummation, through Mr. Gladstone's legislation, of their hopes so long deferred. (Cheers.)

You welcomed then a powerful leader, justly called by one of you the second political personage in the kingdom, who spoke with all the sense of special responsibility and all the conditions of reserve belonging to his place, and yet with a frankness which showed that he knew not only when to be silent but when to speak out. (Hear, hear.)

To-night you have been pleased to create a completely contrasted condition. Inferior in all else, he to whom you are good enough now to listen has this single advantage: that he is absolutely free from the responsibilities which belong to a leader whose words may commit followers, embarrass public affairs, or complicate critical situations. A mere private in the ranks, a raw recruit—nay, worse, a soldier who has learned the drill of another manual, who has been trained to a different service, and whose first work must be to unlearn much in order that he may be able to learn more—such an one is very likely to commit himself, but fortunately he can commit no one else. (Laughter.) He can upset no cart except his own, and after all what signifies one donkey cart more or less? (Renewed laughter.) Thus I enjoy an enlargement of freedom proportioned to the limitation of my responsibilities; and there is no reason why I should not hazard frank opinions on some things which have occurred to me, almost a stranger and bystander, in view of the political fray for which the lists have this day been opened.

But first let me express the admiration which I have long felt for the principles and the practices (things not always to be conjoined in praise) of this Club. I congratulate you most heartily on the magnitude of your efforts, the extent of your successes, and the degree to which, directly or indirectly, you have affected the result of the Election. Your membership now comprises over one-third of the Liberal Party in Parliament. The gains made in seats taken by your members represent more than the majority of the allied parties. Who shall calculate the deadly effect of the

numerous or innumerable speeches made by your members for other Liberal standard bearers? (Laughter.)

But apart from this election work, your object, "the bringing together of successive generations of Liberals," as stated in your constitution, is an important, indeed a vital thing. The contact between youthful, middle aged, and venerable Liberalism, the maintenance of bonds of union and sympathy between representatives of Liberalism of various degrees of force and energy, cannot but do good. As we grow older, and especially if we have been fortunate enough to see much accomplished, which in our hey-day of youth represented very advanced ideas, there seems in many of us a slight tendency to rigidity of the mental muscles, even to ossification of the mental joints; and we are disposed to the impression that the goal has been attained, and that the time has come "to rest and be thankful." We are disposed to exclaim

"We have had enough of action and of motion, we

Rolled to starboard, rolled to larboard, when the surge was seething free;" and we take to lotos eating, reclining on the shore. (Laughter.) To few indeed do there remain, even in middle age, the strenuous and persistent earnestness and eagerness of youth. To most of us the friendly pressure from behind, the hurrying quick step, and "the tap of the daring drum" of the younger members of the Eighty Club would I fancy supply a useful stimulus, or perhaps a necessary spur. (Hear.)

But apart from all effects of time, the Liberal army needs for its efficiency some such organization as you provide. Some years ago, in my own country, speaking to a young Liberal Club, I attempted to describe the nature of our formation in Canada; and I venture the belief that my description was not wholly inapplicable to the Liberal Party here. Let me quote its substance. "Our formation has been open. We have marched in loose order, "in open ranks. Included in those ranks are men whose paces "and rates of progress differ. Some there are who move in the "advance guard, who see, or think they see, further than the rest, "who project their minds into a more distant future and look, long "before the time at which it can be garnered, for the harvest to be

“reaped some other day ; who sow the seeds which are to produce that harvest. Then you find the main body, going steadily onward, dealing chiefly with those questions which after due ripening, have become the questions of the day—problems in practical politics. Then you find an efficient and important part of the army in the rear-guard, composed of those who, while alive to the true principals of Liberalism, yet rather emphasize the importance of making haste slowly ; in whom caution is often the prominent element ; who steady us in our course, put on the brakes and prevent us from going too fast, or getting at loose ends. These form a valuable element in that composition which makes our party an effective instrument for accomplishing the public good, and they must not be underestimated. Now a party of progress, a party which does not believe that the prime function of a politician is to stand still until he is forced to move on or move out, which believes in the progress of Liberal doctrines and the development of Liberal views, must make up its mind to find within its ranks considerable differences of opinion, consistently with concurrence in general principles, and in the views held on such questions as are ripe for embodiment in practical legislation.” (Cheers).

I went on, gentlemen, to point out the generous and liberal mode of action and feeling which I thought we should adopt towards members who on some isolated points felt it impossible to agree with their party (hear, hear) ; but I took leave to say that when the fight came on, it was needful that our forces should unite in their full strength, should conduct the campaign on the practical pressing questions, and should not be led away either by Tory foes or by crotchety friends into the pursuit of some issue on which, to the Tory profit, we might be divided. (Cheers.) I pointed out that practical politicians must deal with practical politics, with the weighty issues actually joined—that we must, as the struggle became imminent, close our ranks, advance our forces, push the enemy from his indefensible position, press on in due order those questions on which the party was united, which it had made its platform of immediate reform ; and that it was only by

their acting and uniting, not forgetting the future, but dealing mainly with the present, which is, as far as action is concerned, the important thing—that we could hope to attain a great, a glorious, and a lasting victory. (Cheers.) May I presume to suggest that the spirit of these remarks has some application to the recent and present situation? (Hear, hear.)

But I have quoted them for another purpose also; to point out that, whatever relevance their general tenor may have to you as members of the Liberal Party, what relates to the normal laxity of Liberal discipline has now but a very limited application to those amongst whom I am enlisted—to the ranks of the Irish National Party. It is well that each of the allied forces should recognize the conditions under which the other is constituted. (Hear.) The Irish Party has been created and is maintained for a defined object, under a very strict discipline, allowing a very limited degree of latitude to its members—a discipline so strict, a latitude so limited as to be in my view justifiable only by the almost unique conditions. But I believe it to be by those conditions amply justified. (Cheers.) The lessons of experience had taught the futility of action on other lines, had shown that the effective assertion of Irish interests in the Imperial Parliament required this system. (Hear, hear.)

The Parliamentary weapon which was thus forged under Mr. Parnell's lead, was of such weight and solidity of metal, such fineness of temper and keenness of edge, that, wielded by him and his advisers, it wrought great things for Ireland. (Hear.) But it proved its quality under still more trying conditions, when, after the melancholy schism, its great maker and wielder turned his strength against it, and resisted, on the personal question at issue, the inevitable decision of the majority. It overcame even his powerful attacks. (Cheers.) The good work he had done in forging that weapon, in showing the Irish people their strength within the constitution, in winning them from some of the more violent counsels of weakness and despair, in forming, so soon as the Liberal Party had taken up the cause, an alliance with that Party on honourable and independent but close and cordial terms,

in recognizing the difficulties of the situation and moderating extreme demands, in creating a friendly feeling between Ireland and the British Democratic and Liberal masses—that good work still survives. (Cheers.) The weight of the weapon may indeed have been somewhat lessened, its edge somewhat broken and blunted for the time ; but it is even now a weapon fully adequate for its purpose (hear) ; and for my part I will express the hope that all damages will be, as they should be, soon repaired, and that ere long its action will be to the full as powerful, as precise, and as far-reaching as ever before. (Cheers.)

I know and I deplore the unhappy incidents of the conflict. I can, I think, appreciate the bitterness and wrath which it has evoked, and the great evils it has wrought. Though no question of principle seems now at stake, feelings and passions have been aroused, perhaps even harder to compose. (Hear, hear.) Yet I hope that the minority, looking calmly over the field, will after reflection see that the tactics of the majority are sound. I trust that with time, patience and moderation on the part of Irishmen, and vigorous and determined pursuit of their pledged policy on the part of British Liberals (hear), we may, some day not far removed, see a completely re-united party.

But let us mark the gain to be drawn even now from this present distress. Mr. Parnell's great work of reconciliation lives after him ; lives even in spite of him ; and thus has demonstrated in the most striking way its durability. (Cheers.) The great majority of the Irish Nationalists have rejected the counsels of suspicion and distrust, have held fast to the cords of friendship and confidence, have stood to the alliance. A minority only, and these sustained by the good wishes at any rate of the Tories, have to any extent dissented from that course. And these after all, representing to-day the extremists of Ireland, now demand in substance an effective Home Rule Bill. But for that matter so do we ; and to an effective Home Rule Bill you all are pledged. (Cheers.) Though they have for the time replaced confidence by distrust, yet as I understand they avow their intention to give the Liberals their chance, to await the production of the Bill, and

to deal with it on its merits. I indulge the hope that its merits will be such as to secure their hearty support. (Cheers.)

The Bill may not be in every detail exactly what some Irishmen would like. On that head let me quote a remark made to me by Mr. Parnell, which struck me as very reasonable. He said that he had never been able to appreciate the importance that some attached to defects in mere details of the Bill. (Cheers.) Supposed defects should of course be pointed out, and if possible remedied; but, granted a substantially sound measure, it should be cheerfully accepted and fairly worked, with the desire to make it a success; and if adverse forecasts as to some detail should thereafter be verified by full experience, of course by common consent they would be remedied. (Renewed cheers.) That is the true view. Depend upon it, a substantial measure will give so large a field for action in Ireland, will produce so great a feeling of content in Ireland, that there will be neither time nor inclination for captious criticism, nor encouragement to factitious agitation. (Hear, hear.) The Bill should be as perfect, and provide as fairly for contingencies as the wit of man can devise;—(hear, hear)—but after all I dare say in the Home Rule Bill there may be, as in most great constructive statutes, some defects, and it will be followed, as most such statutes are, by some amendatory legislation; which will be very easily passed, on the essential conditions that it is consistent with the principle of the Bill, and that its propriety is demonstrated by experience. (Cheers.)

You may ask me, "How do you as a Canadian, how do Canadians generally, take so deep an interest in Irish Home Rule?" For myself, as an Irishman, though born beyond the seas, I have naturally felt from my youth a sympathy for and an interest in Ireland. (Hear, hear.) It may be indeed that, had I been brought up within its bounds, since I am of the faith and the class of the minority—since my people did, in the old sad days of revolt and outrage, suffer and suffer severely in the ranks of that minority—I should have been bred in opinions different from those which I have ever held. (Hear.) But, brought up in a democratic country, where the principles of equal rights and of popular and local

government, of Home Rule in political and in municipal affairs are very widely extended and applied, I had nothing to unlearn as to Ireland. (Cheers.) And it has seemed to me for long that the so-called Union was a mockery, and that the true interests of both kingdoms and real union between them could be attained only by the recognition of the principle of local self-government for Ireland with a common and Imperial Parliament for common and Imperial affairs. (Cheers.)

We Canadians, of whatever origin, have indeed a material interest in the settlement of the Irish question, the adverse feeling evoked by which has not merely deprived Canada of her fair share of Irish emigration, but has exacerbated the Irish in the States against England, producing armed incursions, hostile dealings, and unfriendly actions against Canada as a part of the Queen's dominions. Needless to remind you how injuriously this condition of feeling has operated on the relations between the United States and the United Kingdom, or how far it has tended to maintain an estrangement which, in the interests of both countries and of the world at large, ought to be replaced by a sentiment of cordiality and affection. Not we alone, but all the English-speaking countries have been troubled by this question, and have good reason to desire its settlement. (x)

But I should be sorry to create the impression that we were not also animated by nobler feelings. We had present to our minds the American revolutionary struggle for Home Rule. We remembered, too, the minor but to us all-important developments of Home Rule and local liberties in the Canadian possessions. And we sympathised, apart from our material interests, we sympathised with the condition of a nation of fellow-subjects entitled to and refused self-government. (Hear.)

I have been asked to say something to-night of Canadian experience, as illustrating some of the problems of Irish Home Rule. It is impossible in the few moments available to give you more than a bald and general statement, omitting colour and details, qualifications and particulars important to a thorough apprehension of the case. It would take more than one long

speech to state our history, more than one long speech to expound the working of our constitution. No one knows better than yourself, Mr. Chairman, how far the comments must overload the text of a written Constitution, and how carefully the practical working and the remote and indirect results of such a document must be studied.

But I will say to you that our case included the problem of dealing with various races of different creeds, possessing the strongest national and religious feelings, with minorities and majorities in different provinces. You tried with us, a hundred years ago, the experiment of conceding an inadequate measure of legislative control over our domestic affairs, without including the essential element of an Executive responsible to and thus controlled by, the popular assembly. You so retained to yourselves, by means of the Executive and the Crown—nominated Legislative Council, and of certain revenues, the power of thwarting the views of the popular body, and made our self-government largely a sham. This was done under the apprehension that we were not capable of self-government—(laughter)—and under the belief that the majority in race and creed would use their power to oppress the so-called loyal minority, which posed as the English party, and argued that the connection depended upon its continued ascendancy, or on the continued deprivation of the popular rights demanded. Under your system gross abuses prevailed; discontent and agitation ensued; petitions to your authorities were delayed, neglected or declined; and in the end rebellion raised its armed hand.

You suspended the Constitution, and sent out an able Commissioner, with a perhaps more able adviser; and his report, though in some of its suggestions and forecasts less wise than in others, yet gave pregnant proof and clear demonstration of the evils of your system and the necessity and advantage of Home Rule. (Hear, hear.) On his advice, sixty years ago, you gave, by legislation in 1841, and by executive action a little later, a fuller measure of Home Rule and responsible government as between yourselves and your colony, and thus at once secured, in large

measure, the contentment and affection of your subjects. But your measure contained several blemishes, which at intervals, guided by experience, you removed. One capital error was that which disappeared twenty-five years ago on the formation of the new Dominion. In 1841, with the object of unifying and Anglicizing the population, and of protecting an English and Protestant minority, you had accompanied your reform by a legislative union of the English Province of Upper Canada with the Province (mainly French) of Lower Canada. You thus hoped to fuse the French and English populations in one harmonious English whole ; and to protect the English Protestant minority in Lower Canada (which, like such a minority elsewhere, naturally desired the maintenance of its favoured situation) from the fancied danger of oppression by the French and Roman Catholic majority.

Your experiment of a Legislative Union was fairly tried ; but it did not take a great many years to convince sensible people that the attempt to extinguish French national feeling was doomed to failure—I will say, to deserved failure—and provoked only more determined and gallant efforts to maintain its strength. This failing, we tried for years, under the form of a Legislative Union, to work on some, at any rate, of the principles of Home Rule for each division of the Province, but without success. The relations between the two divisions became more and more strained and hostile. The West, overpassing its elder sister, demanded representation according to population. The East resisted. Friction and deadlock, faction and antagonism, instability and inefficiency in government ensued ; almost all things to be deprecated ensued. Your system of Legislative Union broke down. (Hear, hear.)

In the end, after twenty-five years' trial, we decided to abandon it, substituting Federal for Legislative Union ; in a word, we restored Home Rule in local matters to each Province, and formed a Union limited to their common concerns. (Cheers.) The results, though they have not in all respects answered some high expectations, have yet fully justified the advocates of the principle of Home Rule. Our Constitution is in several respects defective.

In my opinion, its provisions offer lessons for warning and avoidance, as well as for example and imitation. But as to the efficacy of the principle, the probability of many good effects now doubted, the unlikelihood of many ill results now dreaded here, our experiment does, I conceive, afford great and valuable light.

The relations of hostility and suspicion, jealousy and opposition, which were most conspicuous as between the two Provinces, ill-joined in a legislative union, have now largely disappeared. Each feels secure in the possession of its conceded local freedoms and powers. Each agrees that the great principle of domestic control over local affairs and joint regulation of common concerns, has been the true solvent of our cardinal difficulty; each, being allowed to manage its own, is content to be united with the other for the disposition of joint affairs. (Hear, hear.)

I do not tell you that all has always gone well in Canada. Our Constitution has its seamy side; our politics have their squalid and disheartening elements; much has happened which I, for one, deeply regret and deplore. I have belonged to a Party, numbering nearly half the population, which has for much the greater part of twenty-five years been in Opposition, and has ineffectually resisted a great deal of what has been done. Why do I mention these things? To ask you to judge or meddle in our Party conflicts? Not so. (Hear, hear.) I mention them for this cogent reason—that while Canadians are deeply, sharply, roughly divided in opinion; while a large section of the people believe that the policy of the Government is wrong and injurious; nay, more, while it believes that the Government is maintained in its position by the abusive employment, for party purposes, of the powers and resources of the State; yet the attachment of the people to Home Rule, to their powers of self-government, is not confined to the dominant party in the Dominion or Province—to the party which you might expect to approve of a system which it controls. It exists strongly in the hearts of the political minorities. They may deem themselves misgoverned for the moment; but they would scorn to look elsewhere for governors. (Cheers.) They had rather be even misgoverned for a time at home than

better ruled from abroad. (Hear, hear.) They cling to and cherish as their most sacred and valued privilege the powers and responsibilities with which as a whole they are invested ; and they intend by means of them to work out their own salvation. (Hear, hear.) They will evoke no "god out of a machine" to settle their difficulties. The disease may be bad, the remedy would be worse. (Hear, hear.) Mark whether what I say be not verified by your experience. Speaking, of course, in the general, omitting the possible exception which proves the rule, have you not ceased to be troubled in your British Parliament by Canadian internal affairs? Of course there is sometimes trouble as to our foreign relations, which you regulate. But in local matters I doubt that Canada has in my time given rise to a serious debate in Parliament. (Hear, hear.)

And now let me say a word as to the suggested danger of the oppression of minorities of race or creed. The shores of the North Atlantic and Pacific Oceans, of our mighty rivers and vast inland seas, are glorious shores indeed, and inhabited by noble races. But they are not the heavenly shores, nor are they peopled by unfallen angels or by saints who, purged of their earthly stains, have passed to their everlasting rest. (Laughter.) They are settled by men of like passions and prejudices, timidities and apprehensions with yourselves ; and there, as well as here, there have occurred, and there will occur, even in our more enlightened age, some recrudescences of race prejudice and religious bigotry, and seasons of alarm among well-intentioned but timid men. But I can express the confident opinion that the apprehensions of danger once entertained, and still in some quarters sometimes asserted, have not been verified—have been refuted by the result. (Hear, hear.) We have in Canada a powerful Orange party ; we have doubtless bigoted men in the Roman Catholic and in the Protestant denominations ; we have good men with nerves. (Laughter.) But the sober and settled thought of the great majority of our people, of each creed and race, has shown itself superior to the efforts of bigots, the cries of alarmists, the aims of extremists of whatever creed or race, and has satisfactorily proved

our general adhesion to the principles of civil and religious liberty, and of equal rights. (Hear, hear.) Markedly have we shown the efficacy of covenanted organic guaranties and restrictions, which have ever been sacredly observed by us. Sir, minorities, all the world over, are rather apt to be suspicious, jealous, alarmist, and exacting. (Hear.) They are sometimes so with us. Specially is this the case when they have enjoyed exceptional privileges. These conditions we should recognize. My own poor effort has been to affirm, as the duty of majorities, the adoption of these principles ; first, the sacred observance of statutory organic covenants or restrictions ; next, the recognition of the high and God-given claim of justice and equal rights ; lastly, the moral obligation of a majority to grant, as it can afford to grant, to a minority not merely a literal grudgingly-measured quantum of strict justice, but full measure heaped up and running over. (Hear, hear.) These are the principles which I do believe are held by the masses of the Canadian people. These are the principles which lately, addressing Irish meetings, I have endeavoured feebly to expound with cordial and enthusiastic acceptance.

Now, much that I have so far said would be applicable and encouraging, were I giving you the account of Canada as an independent State, regulating its affairs by a system of central and local governments. The analogy would even so be close. But you may ask me, "What of Home Rule in Canada as affecting its relation to the Empire? What of the future of the country?" Its future is hidden from our view. The long delay in grappling with the problem of the relation of the great colonies to the mother country, the absence and apparent impossibility of devising any system for common control over what might possibly have continued or become common concerns, have naturally and necessarily led to the gradual but permanent division of these concerns, and to the concession of the separate interest and control of the colony. Thus there have grown up diverse habits of thought and feeling ; different and divergent interests, systems, and policies ; varied engagements, relations, and conditions ; and there has been a steadily diminishing proportion of common interests ; and thus

have the tremendous and perhaps insuperable difficulties in the way of formulating a plan for the federation of the Empire—or for permanently reconciling, as to the great colonies, British connection with British freedom—been enormously increased. (Hear, hear.) My sympathy with their grand ideal has led me, though disapproving of some of their plans, and finding no solution on their or indeed on any lines, to watch in anxious expectation while others, infinitely more competent and influential, have been engaged in the attempt to prosecute the work of federation. But I have seen, I regret to say, no new light from their labours.

This, then, is all that I will now say—and it is the material point for the present purpose—that I believe the sentiment of attachment and respect, of loyalty and affection on the part of the masses of the Canadian people towards the United Kingdom, to be widespread and deep-rooted; and that I am convinced it owes what strength and vitality it possesses in a very great degree to your concession of Home Rule in local affairs. (Cheers.) It is difficult for any man—I confess it is impossible for me—accurately to gauge the depth of the national sentiment, to mark the directions and estimate the forces of the various and often hidden streams of the national thought. But, if I rightly judge, the measure of content in Canada, and of her desire to find some way whereby she may, consistently with her national aspirations and her material interests, remain connected with these islands, is due to Home Rule in local affairs. (Hear, hear.) The measure of doubt or difficulty, of inclination or tendency to look to some other future, is mainly due to her geographical situation and physical conditions, and their various consequences, and to the absence of any practicable plan for setting up what would now be regarded as common and Imperial interests, to be dealt with in a common and Imperial Parliament. Here then, the analogy becomes less close. But it becomes less close because the difficulties in the case of Canada do not exist in the case of Ireland. Ireland is at your doors: you and she now have great common Imperial interests; you and she now enjoy a common and Imperial Parliament, where those interests have long been, and will, I trust, ever continue to be

treated. You have not to create or to undo, but only with modifications to continue your existing system. (Cheers.)

It was, indeed, the consideration of our own case, of its analogies and differences and tendencies that greatly increased my distaste to the plan of excluding Ireland from representation in the Imperial Parliament, in so far as its deliberations touch common concerns ; as, for example, trade, commerce, and navigation ; customs and excise ; foreign relations ; military and naval forces. These I hold, amongst others, rightly common. The interest of Ireland as much as that of England is that they should be common. (Hear, hear.) But while Ireland, though she may accept if you offer it, can claim no part in the decision of your local affairs, she would be unworthy of herself did she rest permanently content that you should dispose of these great, all-important, national and imperial questions in a Parliament in which she had no voice. The better she managed her local affairs under Home Rule the stronger her case for control over the rest. (Cheers.) And the demand, when made at some later day, would be more likely to take the form of a claim for the remission of these as separate concerns to each country than for the re-admission of Irish members to Westminster. In a word, this element of the measure seemed to be not only indefensible in principle and temporary in character, but also dangerous in tendency ; and therefore I heartily rejoice in its elimination.

You have not, indeed, to grapple, in dealing with continued representation, with the tremendous difficulties which as I have said beset the realization of a scheme of Imperial federation. Those points which seem insoluble there, are already solved for you. But doubtless some difficulties remain. If I may venture a pious opinion, a view by no means susceptible of early adoption, not even ripe as yet for serious discussion, it is that the ultimate solution, in the most satisfying sense, of these difficulties, the restoration to its full efficiency of the Imperial Parliament, the management to the best advantage of the local affairs of the great divisions of Britain, will be found, as was some time ago suggested by one of the most distinguished members of this Club, to lie in the extension to those divisions of some form of Home Rule. Meantime we must

be content to reach a solution, perhaps not capable of complete logical defence, but which in practice may work well enough. It is not our English habit to insist on absolute perfection. We are perhaps rather ostentatiously averse to yield to theoretical defects. We boast ourselves a practical people; and rather shun philosophers or theorists. And, though my own opinion is that good theory applied will make good practice, yet I am quite at one with those sensible persons who will accept one imperfect detail rather than abandon a great improvement, who will adopt a plan on the whole beneficial, even though some one point may be open to objection. (Cheers.)

As to the continued supremacy of Parliament, and the practical efficacy of legal limitations on local legislative powers, our case is pregnant with instruction. The supremacy of the Imperial Parliament exists, and must continue. It cannot divest itself of its awful attributes if it would. For that a revolution would be necessary. (Hear, hear.) What Parliament enacts it can amend or repeal; the authorities it creates it can modify or abolish. You have on occasion suspended colonial constitutions; you can on occasion suspend an Irish constitution. (Hear, hear.) You have on occasion exercised as to the colonies reserved powers. You can on occasion so deal with Ireland. I am not a friend to a sham Home Rule Bill. (Cheers.) I would hope for little from any plan predicated on a meddlesome supervision by Parliament or the Executive over the decisions of the Irish Legislature, acting within its delegated powers. The errors of that legislature should, as a rule, be corrected by itself. (Hear, hear.) Under any other method you would lose much of the relief to be obtained from Home Rule, and Ireland would receive much less of its advantage. If, indeed, the Irish Legislature should assume to pass an Act in excess of its powers, that Act would be waste paper; it would give no legal sanction for action; the Courts would so pronounce, and the appeal to a properly constituted tribunal would secure a uniform and consistent interpretation of and obedience to the organic law. Our Canadian experience amply demonstrates the practical efficacy and satisfactory operation of this machinery. We

live many thousands of miles away from you ; you have no civil powers or military forces to compel obedience to the rulings of your Judicial Committee. We are not even, as it is rightly proposed that Ireland shall be, represented in that Court by Jurists chosen from among our people and familiar with our systems ; and yet your interpretation of our rights, and your nullification of our Acts, are accepted and obeyed ; and the whole scheme works without a jar. (Hear.) So, as between the Provinces and the Dominion, are the judgments of our Supreme Court accepted, unless appealed.

To deal then with cases of excess, the intervention of the political authority is, speaking generally, wholly needless and very inexpedient. But to meet highly improbable, yet perhaps conceivable cases of *ultra* or *intra vires* legislation which is obviously and seriously prejudicial to the great general interests, you can always exercise your plenary Parliamentary authority ; and you may, if you please (though I should regard them, save under strictly guarded and rigorously observed conditions, as questionable provisions) retain Executive powers of reservation and disallowance adequate to meet all emergencies. (Cheers.)

It may be said "You are arguing from peaceful and contented and law-abiding Canada to agitated and alienated and lawless Ireland, and your analogy fails." I might retort that I am arguing from a vast country situate many thousand miles away, a connection with which you would not and could not attempt to continue by force against her settled and decided will, a country where you have no machinery for enforcing obedience ; to a small island at your very doors, whose continued connection with you in some form you could and would, if necessary, enforce ; whose ports you can fill with your home squadrons, whose barracks are crowded with your troops ; as to which your facilities for the maintenance of Imperial power and the enforcement of just decrees are infinitely superior. (Cheers.) But I will add another and a better answer. I am arguing from Canada, once discontented and rebellious—(cheers)—but which Home Rule has made peaceful, contented and law-abiding—to Ireland, which has

been for want of Home Rule agitated, alienated, and lawless, but which from my soul I believe will, under Home Rule, become peaceful, contented, and law-abiding. (Cheers.) This, after all, is the great solvent. (Hear, hear.) Without this, all schemes will fail; while, with it, even an imperfect scheme will accomplish a good and blessed work. (Cheers.)

Let me turn for a moment before I sit down to some practical questions of the hour. There has been some discussion as to the explanations to be given and the pledges to be asked in the debate now soon to begin.

For myself, I see no reason why we should not be satisfied with the declaration (which no one can doubt will be freely made) that the advent of a Liberal Government will be followed, as its capital object, by the early presentation and earnest prosecution of an efficient measure of Home Rule. Without entering into one other detail of the legislation, I hope it will embrace either provision or power for the final settlement of the Land question. But I see some people, assuming the passage of the Bill through the Commons, want to know just now what the new Government is going to do when the House of Lords rejects it. I object to the form of the question. I decline to assume that the Lords will reject a Bill—the fruit of six years' agitation, followed by a general election at which a majority has been returned in its favour—I decline, at any rate, to facilitate any such action by assuming its possibility at this moment. (Cheers.) The question should be—What will they do if the Lords reject it? (Hear, hear.) But I object to the substance of that question. There is a homely proverb in my country—I know not whether it be current here—"Time enough to bid the devil 'Good morning' when you meet him." (Laughter.) Far be it from me to compare any member of that august assembly to an angel, fallen or unfallen. (Renewed laughter.) It is only the rejection of the Bill which I decline at this moment to ask leaders to anticipate. They may well form, but should not be asked to formulate, plans just now. (Hear, hear.)

But, as we irresponsible persons may each do a little private

anticipation on his own account, and as the rejection of the Bill is at any rate possible, let me say that I hope and trust no true friend of popular rights, nor any real believer in Home Rule, will allow that the House of Lords can by any such action force a dissolution one moment before those in the confidence of the majority think the fit time has come. (Loud cheers.) Meanwhile, let not genuine friends of the cause attempt to fetter, in this or other points, the liberty of action which is essential to success. Let each man keep a free hand to himself if he pleases; but above all, let each agree to maintain the freedom of the old Parliamentary hand. (Cheers.)

It is said sometimes that if by reason of the suggested action we cannot complete Home Rule, we should attempt nothing else in this Parliament. Why so? Even from an exclusively Irish standpoint there are questions which greatly press, some which may even precede, a Home Rule Bill, and others which, if you cannot or will not soon relegate them to an Irish Legislature, you may have to grapple with yourselves. But it would be unjust and impolitic alike for Irish members to look at this point from an exclusively Irish standpoint. There are great questions common to the kingdom, there are great British questions which press upon you; labour questions, social questions, electoral questions. (Cheers.) And I for one can see no reason against, while I see many cogent reasons for, an earnest effort to grapple with some of these during the life of this Parliament. Let us see the Home Rule measure launched and moving steadily along; and I should welcome the progress in its wake of other legislation demanded by the country, and which would give the masses of Ireland through their representatives in Parliament the opportunity of showing their sympathy with the just demands of the British people. (Cheers.)

Without attempting a full list, or an order of time, let me ask why should you not have a Parish Councils Bill, and an Allotments Bill? (Hear.) Why should not the system of Registration, admittedly defective, be amended? (Hear, hear.) Why should you not deal with the question of "one man one vote?"

(Cheers.) As to which, if difficulties or delays are interposed by the threatened "attachments," it may be worth considering whether you cannot at any rate adopt simultaneous polling—a reform which, for other obvious reasons applicable here, we long ago accomplished under greater difficulties, and with excellent results; and, of course, among its advantages is the diminution at any rate of the power of the plural voter. (Hear, hear.) Why should you not provide for the payment of members, and of returning officers' expenses; and thus recognise, as we have long done, the consequences of the new conditions you have created? (Cheers.)

Gentlemen, one word more and I have done. It is the sum of the whole matter. Our success in respect to the capital object of this Parliament depends upon the hearty co-operation of our several organizations in a spirit of mutual trust and confidence, of reasonable recognition of the circumstances of each of the allied forces, and of fair consideration of the position as a whole. (Cheers.) So co-operating, we may at an early day entrust your great leader with power to fulfil his last and highest commission, saying to him:—

Not clinging to some ancient saw,
Nor mastered by some modern term;
Not swift, nor slow, to change, but firm;
Now, in its season, bring the law,
That from Discussion's lips may fall,
With Life, that working strongly, binds;
Set in all lights by many minds,
To close the interests of all!

(Loud cheers.)

Mr. E. J. C. MORTON, in proposing a vote of thanks to Mr. Blake, said: Mr. Chairman, ladies and gentlemen,—I rise with the greatest pleasure to propose a vote of thanks to our distinguished guest for the magnificent speech which we have just heard. After listening to that speech I think we must all of us feel that we are met together to do honour to a statesman whose career and whose present position proves the power of the Irish in their national struggle, marks a new phase into which that struggle has passed, and symbolizes the future strength of the

British and Irish Empire. If we look back upon the history of Ireland, every page of which has been stained with the tears of her children and the blood of her heroes, even if we confine our attention to the more recent period of that history, I think that among all the miseries and wrongs of which Ireland has had to complain, the most touching is this : that there has been no career open to the generous enthusiasm of the youth of Ireland, save only that of a rebel. Take only the wasted energy of the Young Ireland movement of 1848, and consider the men, the heroes, who were engaged in that movement. Think of William Smith O'Brien, a man whose brilliant intellect is still remembered among the College homes of Cambridge ; of Thomas Francis Meagher, an orator fit to rank beside Grattan and Burke ; of John Mitchell, a writer who must be considered one of the masters of the English language—there was not one of those men, and I could continue the list up to a hundred, who found any salvation for his country, save only in abortive revolution. They were all of them tried and punished for treason. They all of them died prematurely, and some of them of a broken heart. And yet the Irish character is not unfitted for the work of government. There was another Young Irishman, Charles Gavan Duffy, who strove long and earnestly by the ordinary methods of political advocacy to benefit his country, and failed, and then, almost broken-hearted, he migrated to Australia, and there, in the free air of a self-governing colony, he rose to be Prime Minister of Victoria, and he, who had been thrice prosecuted for treason in his native land, returned home in his old age to receive honours and knighthood at the hands of the Queen. (Hear, hear.) The names of O'Donnell and McMahon remind us that in foreign countries the Irish genius for government has been recognized. It is only in his native land that a career has hitherto been refused to the Irishman.

Ladies and gentlemen, we are met here to-night to do honour to a statesman who, as I said, symbolizes the strength and power of the Irish in their national struggle, for he was not born in Ireland, was not educated in Ireland, has, I believe, never been domiciled in Ireland, and yet is as Irish to his heart's core as the

most enthusiastic Nationalist in Ireland. He symbolizes millions of Irishmen throughout the British Empire. They may leave the "green isle," but they retain their nationalism to the third and fourth generation. Yes, but he also symbolizes the new phase into which this Irish struggle has recently passed. If I had been speaking half a century ago I make no secret of the fact that I should then have been, under the then conditions, a Separatist. I should have felt that England was a nation self-contained, and by herself, and that Ireland was a nation self-contained, and by herself, and there was no natural organic bond of union or sympathy between them. But since this time a great change has passed over the condition and the spirit of the Irish national struggle. Both England and Ireland have overflowed into their common colonies. We have now a vast colonial population of fellow-citizens with ourselves who feel themselves to be as English as we are, bound to us by ties of community of race, community of character, community of feeling, and community of history. In every one of those colonies there is also a vast Irish population. That Irish population feels itself as Irish as the inhabitants of Ireland, bound to the Irish in Ireland by ties of community of race, community of character, community of feeling, and community of history. Alas ! that history has hitherto divided Ireland and England. Need it divide us any longer ? ("No, no.") I believe we are going to turn over a page of that history, and in effecting the reconciliation of Ireland and England we owe the deepest debt of gratitude to our colonial statesmen, who have shown by the example of our colonies how that reconciliation of the English and the Irish races may be effected.

But, ladies and gentlemen, lastly, the position and the career of Mr. Blake symbolizes the future strength of the British and the Irish Empire. Home Rule, National Self-Government, has changed rebellious Canada into loyal Canada, has united Canada in bonds of loyalty to the British Empire, though three thousand miles of the fierce Atlantic rolls between us and them, and though Canada is severed but by an imaginary line from the United States, Ireland is severed from us but by the silver streak of sixty

miles of channel. I say that once you recognize the nationhood and the dignity of the nationhood of the Irish people, by giving them power of governing themselves, without interference in their purely Irish affairs, the Irish people then will regard the Empire with entirely new and different feelings. They will feel, they have already began to feel, that Ireland is a small nation, and could ill afford an adequate army and navy of her own.

They will feel, and are beginning to feel already, that their geographical position renders it advisable that in Imperial and foreign affairs they should unite with us, and with us should face the world as one. But more than that ; once the sense that the Empire means domination be removed, then I say their very national pride will be bound up with its maintenance. They will call to mind that it was their fathers as well as ours that built up its mighty fabric, that it was they who taught our statesmen by the golden voice of Burke, that it was they who saved our state by the steadfast strength of Wellington, and that wherever British arms have triumphed the world over, there Irish blood has been poured out to purchase victory. But more than that. They will call to mind that across the seas in England's colonies the Irish race lies scattered. Beneath the Southern Cross in Australia, among the cotton plantations and the diamond mines of Africa, and in the far free West amid the cattle ranches and pine forests of Canada the Irish race lies scattered, and Irishmen, whose sires have been so true to her, will never willingly sever herself from them. There has never been a Manchester school in Irish politics. The Irish are possessed with the sense and passion of unity, and I believe the recognition of the nationhood of the Irish people which we are about to achieve in England, will change this scattered Irish race from being the open sore, threatening with desolation and death the Empire our fathers made with the very nervous system that shall unite that Empire in a strength and majesty of which our fathers never dreamed. (Cheers.)

Mr. ROBERT W. HAMILTON, in seconding the vote of thanks, said: Mr. Chairman, Mr. Blake, ladies and gentlemen,— On occasions like the present it is the privilege, as a rule, of

one of the younger members of the Club to second the vote of thanks to the guest of the evening; and though I feel great difficulty in having to follow such an accomplished speaker as Mr. Morton, still I feel myself privileged beyond others to-night, for this is an historical moment after the crisis of this election. Each election, like a tide, leaves a different mark on the course of English history, and the present election has left a mark which is a more distinct and a greater one than that of the various elections which have recently preceded it; for at this election the whole battle, as has been said, has practically turned on one question, and that is the question of Home Rule. The Home Rule movement since its inception has passed through various phases, but it is now passing through a phase more curious than any on which it has yet entered—and that is the phase of completion. (Cheers.) Hitherto the colonies have as a rule been the gainers by the action of the English Government with regard to Ireland, for they have received a very large share of the ability of Irishmen. But to-night the tables are turned, and it is the colonies who are sending to the House of Commons a distinguished statesman of themselves. (Hear, hear.) By Mr. Blake's return for South Longford the very strongest argument has been given against those who, by crying "one flag, one empire," so frequently endanger both. (Cheers.)

Mr. Blake has his experience behind him, and his experience, as he has shown us to-night, is a very practical one as to how Home Rule has worked in Canada, and what result it has brought about, since the days of the rebellion in Canada, to make that country, as it now is, the most loyal of all the English colonies, if it is possible to say one colony is more loyal than another, (hear, hear); for it was in Canada, as we all know, that the conditions were somewhat allied to the conditions that exist in Ireland, although at the same time there are a great many causes which make them different. But still in these conditions we see, arguing from small things to great and from long distances to short, that the same rule which has been applied in Canada may be applied with the same results in Ireland. Mr. Blake has shown

us to-night how he believes, from his practical experience, that autonomy of one part of an empire is perfectly and entirely compatible with the truest loyalty, and that for a really and truly united empire you must have community of interest. It is not by the false bonds of paper unionism, but it is by the real bonds of community of interest, which may be best formed by allowing each member of the empire to manage its own affairs without the interference of the Imperial Parliament, that the units of an empire are to be made one whole. There are young men, dreamers of dreams, who fancy that perhaps the granting of Home Rule, which we hope so soon to see, will be but the laying of the first stone in the building of a larger and more magnificent Imperial edifice ; but be that as it may, we must not dip too far into the future, but must confine ourselves to the present and practical politics of the day. That Home Rule is practical Mr. Blake has shown us to-night, and that it is present we all know. Allow me, then, Sir, on behalf of the younger generation of Liberalism in the Club, to second this vote of thanks to our guest to-night, hoping as we do, to see, at no very distant future, the full enjoyment in Ireland of those benefits which Canada has enjoyed from Home Rule. (Loud cheers.)

MR. BLAKE, in reply, said : Mr. Chairman, ladies and gentlemen,—I am deeply grateful and moved, but I cannot say that I am surprised at the kindness with which you have received the proposal for the vote of thanks. I cannot say that I am surprised ; for, since the tractive power of the call of the leaders of the Irish National Party detached me, at an hour's notice, from the business and occupations of a lifetime, from home and country, from family and friends ; drew me across the broad Atlantic ; and cast me, almost a stranger, upon the Irish and the English shores, I have received at all hands such untiring and unbounded kindness and generosity of treatment as would go far to compensate—if aught on earth could compensate—for all I have left behind. (Cheers.)

The proceedings then terminated.

"EIGHTY" CLUB.

From J. A. B. BRUCE, *Secretary*,

2, MIDDLE TEMPLE LANE,
LONDON, E.C.

DEAR SIR,

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